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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3541
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 6199

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 000116

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/05/2032
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CH](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: AFM HE URGES UNITED STATES TO "PREVENT" CHEN
SHUI-BIAN TRANSIT

REF: A. BEIJING 0001
[1](#)B. 06 BEIJING 8029 (NOTAL)
[1](#)C. JANUARY 4 EAP PRESS GUIDANCE

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires David S. Sedney.
Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

Summary and Comment

[1](#)1. (C) China urges the United States to take steps to prevent Chen Shui-bian from transiting the United States en route to Nicaragua next week, Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei told the Charge d'Affaires January 5. Claiming that the transit stops violate the United States' one-China policy and commitments under the Three Joint Communiqués, AFM He expressed in measured tones China's concern that Chen would use his time on the layovers to advance his "independence agenda," ratchet up tensions across the Strait and undermine relations between the Mainland and the United States. AFM He criticized Chen's New Year speech and expressed hope that the United States would publicly state opposition to Chen's efforts to seek de jure independence prior to a Democratic Progressive Party meeting on January 17. The Charge reiterated the United States' adherence to our one-China policy, adding that consistent with longstanding practice, we are prepared to facilitate occasional transits by Taiwan senior leaders, in keeping with the safety, comfort, convenience and dignity of the travelers. Reminding AFM He that Taiwan has a vibrant democracy, the Charge urged China to engage Chen and other DPP authorities to work toward a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. Although AFM He conveyed his points with seriousness, his tone was less strident than when protesting Chen's proposed transit through the United States last spring (ref B). End Summary and Comment.

No to Stopovers

[1](#)2. (C) AFM He called the CDA to the MFA on January 5 to protest reports Taiwan "President" Chen Shui-bian would transit the United States. AFM He said China understands that Chen intends to transit San Francisco on the way to the January 10 inauguration of President-elect Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, with a stop in Los Angeles on the return trip. AFM He added that China has learned that the United States has already agreed to the stopovers. China is very concerned over the situation and Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong has made serious representations to the United States Government on the matter in Washington. The sole aim of the stopovers is to provoke cross-Straits tensions and damage United States-China ties. Experience shows, AFM He continued, that when Chen has transited the United States in the past, he went beyond past practices and engaged in "separatist activities" that harmed bilateral ties. This time it will be

no different. Chen is in a desperate situation so there is no doubt he will attempt to exploit the transit stops for his own political advantage, AFM He claimed.

13. (C) AFM He said Chen's transit plans could jeopardize United States and China's productive cooperation on North Korea, Iran and other key global issues. AFM He claimed the stopovers violate the United States' one-China policy and commitments under the Three Joint Communiques. AFM He said China urges the United States to take steps to prevent the transit stops and Chen's other separatist activities. In this context, AFM He said China also hopes the United States will publicly and unequivocally express opposition to Chen Shui-bian's efforts to seek de jure independence prior to a DPP conference regarding "sovereignty and the constitution" on January 17.

14. (C) From now until the election in Taiwan in 2008, the cross-Straits situation will be particularly risky, AFM He remarked. Chen is determined to revise the constitution via the second republic approach, AFM He asserted, adding that he is striving to achieve de jure independence regardless of the consequences. "Chen Shui-bian is not to be trusted," AFM He said. Chen's New Year speech provided added evidence of his unreliability. Despite appeals from the United States and the international community, Chen used the speech to "trumpet his independence agenda with the aim of poisoning cross-Straits relations," AFM He contended. Given Chen's recklessness, the United States and China need to cooperate and look at the issue soberly so as to prevent problems across the Strait and avoid damage to the common interests of both countries, he concluded.

Charge Reiterates One-China Policy, Transit Practices

15. (C) On the transit stops, the Charge reiterated the United States' adherence to our one-China policy based on the Three Joint Communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. Citing the guidance in reference C, the CDA said that we understand Chen is considering traveling to Nicaragua to attend the inauguration of President Daniel Ortega. Taiwan, through the American Institute in Taiwan, has raised the possibility of transiting the United States to and from this event. In accordance with our one-China policy, which is based on the Three Joint Communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act, and consistent with longstanding practice, we are prepared to facilitate occasional transits by Taiwan senior leaders, in keeping with the criteria of safety, comfort, convenience and dignity of travelers. The specifics of Chen's travel, including details of any possible transits of the United States, are still being worked out.

16. (C) Turning to the issue of Chen's New Year speech, the Charge reminded AFM He that the Chinese side claimed it had "reliable knowledge" and then warned the United States in Washington and Beijing on December 29 and 30 (ref A) that Chen would make extreme statements in his annual address, namely calling for a constitutional freeze and establishment of a second republic. No such statements appeared in the speech, the Charge observed. The United States is aware of China's concerns regarding Chen and the DPP. The Charge urged the Chinese government to engage with Taiwan's elected officials, including Chen and other DPP representatives. The United States is not of the view that the only way to deal with Chen is through unrelenting pressure and limiting of options. Presenting exclusively negative choices is not the way to move forward. Rather, we believe it is very important for people on both sides of the Strait to engage in dialogue to move toward a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue that is acceptable to both sides, the Charge said. "No time is too late, no opportunity should be turned away" for China to seek to reduce tensions. The United States, the Charge assured AFM He, will continue to act responsibly.

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